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THE LIFE

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ADRIENNE ORTZ

Rizi

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Marilyn Il Mito

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entitled for any eventual missing sources or mistaken citations

Errata The top caption on page 230 should read: Collezione Gastone Ranzato, Padua

page 2: "Look" (USA), 5/29/1956 Photo: Milton Greene

page 5: Marilyn Monroe on the day of her divorce from Joe DiMaggio, 10/27/1954

pages 8-9: Photo: Douglas Kirkland

page 13: Marilyn Monroe and Arthur Miller "Epoca" (Italy), no. 440, 3/8/1959 Photo: Richard Avedon

endpaper: "Photo HI FI Italiana" no. 115 - January 1985 Photo: André De Dienes

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Memories

Sam Shaw

For Marilyn, New York was an exciting adventure, away from the provincialism of Los Angeles, Hollywood — the make believe world. Marilyn loved truth, particularly "Actor's Truth." She was an actress. She was many characters, invented, recreated and herself.

Aphrodite was not an empty aphorism. She was Aphrodite of 3,000 years ago. She was literally a goddess of sex and love, as she herself said, even though she never knew the myths and legends of the past.

Thirty years old, she learned about

Beethoven (from Arthur Miller). When I saw her in the Hamptons, the first thing she asked was "What do you think about the Quartets?"
I said, "You mean Modern Jazz Quartets?" (the popular music of the time).

"No" she said, "I mean Beethoven's String Quartet."

Arthur Miller was opening her mind to music, the theater, New York City culture, and Brooklyn.

New York, now violence and fires

culture, and Brooklyn.

New York, now violence and fires.

Then the people loved her. She loved them. Taxi drivers, truck drivers, street cleaners, working people (women and men), poets and journalists...

Marilyn said, "They made me a star...

Not the studios, the press, or the agents, but the people."

Young people still ask me: "What was she like?" She was a young woman, always with the spirit of a teenager entering maturity. Whenever fame and success come, there is also pain, especially for an actress.

I first met Marilyn in Hollywood in 1949 when I was working on the post production for Kazan's *Panic in the Streets*. Marilyn was Kazan's

sweetheart. She was out of work waiting for her option as a starlet extra at 20th Century-Fox...

We became friends when I worked on Kazan's *Viva Zapata*, in the Calabasso Rench studio. I did not drive, so

Kazan's Viva Zapata, in the Calabasso Ranch studio. I did not drive, so Marilyn drove me to location the next day Kazan, Marilyn, and I were a trio. This was in 1950.

Marilyn's contract was picked up by 20th Century-Fox. She did a series of small bit parts including a three minute scene in All About Eve. Bette Davis and Anne Baxter were the stars, but Marilyn's scene brought in more fan letters than the starring actresses did 20th Century-Fox sent her to New York to see a musical play. They had plans for her to do a featured role if picked her up a the Sherry Netherlands Hotel. This was her first trip to New York. The first thing I asked was "What do you want to do and see?" Marilyn answered, "I want to see

the Theosophist Headquarters."

Although she had no formal education, she searched for God, for knowledge, and was interested at all times in religion.

One day I took her to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It was 1952 and there was a special Goya exhibition. When she saw Goya's black horrors of war and violence, witches on a broomstick flying through the night, she grabbed my arm and said, "I know this man very well... I have the same dreams.." She had those dreams to the end. Marilyn was becoming a New Yorker. She loved the excitement and the multi-cultured ambience. She loved the idea of Brooklyn I took her to the Brooklyn Eagle where I had started working in the art department after graduating from high school. Marilyn loved poetry, the poetry of Walt Whitman I told her Walt Whitman had been a reporter and editor of the Brooklyn Eagle when he was young We walked across the Brooklyn Bridge It was dusk, and it was starting to rain. New York's skyline, with the lights coming up, looked like Babylon. Marilyn said, "I love Brooklyn, Arthur Miller lives there. I love Arthur Miller, would you call Arthur and put me in contact with him?" I did-On a hot August day, Marilyn and I

were walking on Fifth Avenue. She wore a mink coat, As we neared 44th Street, Mary Bodney, the owner of the Algonquin Hotel, came by. I introduced Marilyn to her.

Mrs. Bodney said, "Marilyn, today is the hottest day and you are wearing a mink coat."

Marilyn replied, "Joe DiMaggio just gave me a present. This mink coat." She flashed her coat open for a quick moment. She was completely nude. Marilyn loved Central Park, its trees, the jogging paths, the lake. She loved rowing and talking to the young people and signing autographs. Marilyn posed for the fans, giving all to amateur photographers as she did to great professionals like Bert Stem, Richard Avedon, and Philippe Halsman. I saw her stop and pose for fans, keeping famous producers like Jack Warner, Sam Goldwyn, Darryl Zanuck, Charles Feldman and stars like Humphrey Bogart, William Holden, Claudette Colbert, Lauren Bacali, waiting She saw the people in the street to be as important as the stars of Hollwood and Broadway.

Marilyn was legendary for her lack of punctuality. At the New York opening of *The Seven Year Itch*, she was to be the guest of honor. We waited for her for over an hour. Joe DiMaggio was

waiting in the lobby of her hotel. I rushed up to her room to see what was wrong. There she was, only wearing stiletto heels. A 40 watt bulb was her only light.

"Marilyn," I said "you are not only late, but your makeup is so vulgar and overdone!"

"Sam," she said "I don't care for the V.I.P.s in their Cadillacs, the big shots in the lobby. I care for the people across Times Square who can't get up close.

If my makeup were tasteful and elegant, they wouldn't see me..." But that was Marilyn. She was an hour late to the opening. The audience in the theater, the critics, the projectionist, Joe DiMaggio, all forgave her, understood her. They loved her. It was June 1, her birthday and my daughter's. Joe DiMaggio sent Marilyn two tickets to the circus so she could take Edie.

Edie and myself were waiting for Marilyn in the lobby of her hotel. She came down wearing a babushka, a skirt and a blouse. The crowd of fans waiting outside did not recognize her. So Marilyn excused herself and ran back into the hotel. She removed her babushka, fixed her hair, and put on makeup. She came back outside glamorously and the fans asked her for

her autograph and took photos. She then got into a taxi with Edie and drove off to the circus.

She sat with Edie and watched the circus, nobody knowing who she was, because she had removed her makeup and put the babushka back on. Six crew members of the circus came up to her and their spokesman said, "Three of us say you are Marilyn, the others say no. Are you Marilyn?" Marilyn replied, "Thank you. I hear Marilyn is beautiful. I wish I were her." She then turned to Edie and said, "If you want to talk to me don't say Marilyn, say, hey you, hey there or, haystack."